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The
United
Reformed
Church

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Friday from Noon till Three, By Rev Fiona Bennett



Friday from Noon till Three - The Magdalene's Lament is the name of this picture by Jan Richardson. As Mary Magdalene stands by the cross of Jesus on Good Friday, a part of her is ripped away. At the foot of the cross, as Jesus' life bled from him, so from Mary love, hope, friendship, purpose, justice, belonging, identity is ripped away, revealing a gaping tear in her being.

The gift of Good Friday is

space to acknowledge these tears in all of us and in our world; the battles for power which result in situations of horror like Eastern Ghouta, the blinkered greed which results in rainforest deforestation, the abyss of grief, the exhaustion of poverty, the perversion of injustice, the destructiveness of self-loathing, are all part of the gaping tear in the torso of our humanity, as individuals and as an interconnected planet. Mary Magdalene mirrors them, bore them, lived them, and her story allows us on Good Friday to see our gaping tear at the foot of the cross in her story.

Three days later as Mary stood confused and weeping outside an empty tomb, she heard Jesus call her name and she was transformed. Her scar did not magically disappear, it would always be with her, but she began to discover it was not to be the death of her, but would lead her to life beyond hope.

Getting Involved

Within AUC there are Ministry Teams which are responsible for different areas of Church Life. If you would like to know more or get involved with one of these please e-mail the contact person.

Centre, Property & Finance

Tom Murray

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Children & Young People

Kirsty Murray

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Our Tribe (LGBTI Ministry)

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Peace & Justice

Harriet Davidson

harrietdavidson@hotmail.com

Pastoral & Mental Health

Doris Caldwell

hhfcdawell@gmail.com

Worship

Rev Fiona Bennett

minister.auc@gmail.com

If you would like to get involved volunteering within AUC or the local community:

AUC Volunteering

Fiona Somerville

rota.auc@gmail.com

Local Community Volunteering

Della Morris

dellagreenlanes@gmail.com

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It is my prayer that outside the desolate and confusing tombs in our world, we too may hear the Easter morning calling of our name and begin to discover the scars of Good Friday tears, transformed to life beyond hope.



A big THANK YOU to Nancy Dyer and all those who manned, baked for and bought from the cake stall on Homelessness Sunday. The stall sold out in record time thanks to everyone's generosity (*your editor was too busy chatting and by the time she'd turn up up the stall was bare. What a lovely problem to have*). The £160 raised goes to Scottish Churches Housing Action who we know will put the funds to good use.

Scottish Churches Housing Action



no room for homelessness!



A picture of the able assistants (or should that be able pirates?!) who helped to remind us during our time for all ages that you can't spell home without me!

Could You Spare a Night for the Bethany Winter Shelter?



Some members of AUC will be giving up a night or two from Monday 5th to Thursday 8th March to help a team from St Columba's by the Castle provide the evening meals at the Bethany Winter Shelter. From January until April the shelter is being housed by Meadowbank Church. If you'd be able to help out in the evening one night that week please do get in touch with Kathleen, whose details are on the front cover of Seeds.



This Is Fairtrade Fortnight!

Monday 26th February to Sunday 11th March

Supporting the Fairtrade movement – now more than 20 years old – is one way we can show our commitment to vulnerable folk around the world in developing countries who produce our food and other commodities. Fairly traded food is available in the supermarkets and in the One World Shop under St. John's Church at the west end of Princes Street. You can identify fairly traded goods by the icon which you see in the top left corner here.

So 'Come On In' to a 'Big Brew'

Saturday 10th March

10.30am-12.30pm and 2.30pm-4.30pm

Anne Mackenzie's house

enjoy a fairly traded 'cuppa' and light snacks with a friendly chat.

P.S. Did you know that 165 million cups of tea are drunk every day in the UK?

Gift Day Breakfast 2018: Sunday 4th March

Our annual gift days began as part of the fundraising for our Roof and Heritage Project which we completed last year. There is still much to do to keep our building up-to-date to meet the needs of a growing and active congregation and the great variety of community groups who find a meeting place with us.



Last year the gift day raised over £13,000 and it is a vital part of our finances. The Minister and Treasurer will be available from 10.00 on Sunday 4th March to receive your gifts and there will be coffee and healthy bacon and cheese rolls for breakfast!

In addition to our gift day there are lots of opportunities through the year for social events, craft sales, concerts and other events that catch the imagination which combine modest fundraising with the opportunities for fun and getting together which are important for a gathered congregation.

We would like to recruit an "encourager" to stimulate folk into putting on the activities they would enjoy with the additional satisfaction of doing some fundraising on the side. Do you have the talent to encourage members of the congregation and facilitate their projects? If you do we would love to hear from you.

Tom Murray



Our Tribe Relaunch Sunday 11th February

We had been planning for several months our Relaunch Celebration Service to mark the new Sunday Our Tribe events. Our Tribe will now meet on the second Sunday of each month. You are all warmly invited to come along and experience Our Tribe.

We were joined by David Pickering, Moderator of the Scottish Synod of the URC, who brought us a word of encouragement and we had a video message from Rev Elder Rachelle Brown, Interim Moderator of Metropolitan Community Churches. Along with old faces and new, we sang, worshiped and David, Maxwell Reay, Fiona Bennett and Mike Holroyd co-celebrated communion.

We lit candles and received personal prayer at a number of prayer stations. We heard testimonies from Dariusz, Rachel, Cam and Anna. Each shared part of their coming out story. These were emotional and moving accounts of each individual's life. We had a commissioning prayer for the Our Tribe Church Life Ministry Team.

This was a service that took much from MCC's traditions of worship and rooted this in the context of Augustine's worship style.

This marked a new beginning for our ministry. Since 2010, when Our Tribe began, we have seen much change in the recognition of LGBTQI people of faith within the LGBTQI community. Similarly, many churches in Edinburgh have changed their views and are now affirming of LGBTQI people, to a greater or lesser extent. All this would not have been possible without your support of Our Tribe as well as welcoming and affirming the many LGBTQI people who attend Augustine. This is something for us all to be proud of.

We have planned a number of things for future Our Tribe events. We will have a worship service every 3 months and 3 times a year we will consciously make Our Tribe 'family friendly'. The other months will focus on a variety of topics with a short worship element with communion at its heart.

So put it in your diary and come along and discover what Our Tribe has to offer you!

Lewis Reay

Next Up At Our Tribe - Coming Out Of The Wilderness

The next Our Tribe on Sunday 11th March will explore the theme 'Coming Out Of The Wilderness'. Traditionally, Lent is a time where we look at how we can be more authentically ourselves. By reflecting on the experience of Jesus in the wilderness through words, music and reflection, we will consider how we can use the wilderness experiences within our own lives and the life of the world to bring about positive change and healing. The celebration of communion, open to all, will, as always, be part of this time together.

Please join us at 3pm for 3.30pm for this time of worship and reflection. We look forward to seeing you there!

Vacancies



Door Stewards

Welcoming people to AUC on a Sunday morning is one of the most important roles within our Sunday service. Is this something which you could help with?

Each Sunday there are three door stewards who welcome and seek to make people coming to worship feel safe and at home. *"Do you need a seat at the side to exit quickly to the loo? Are you new and would you like someone to sit with? Do you have kids and would they like to meet the Junior Church Team before the service starts?"* These are but a few of the thoughts and concerns of the door stewards as they try to care for each worshipper and guest who comes along.

As well as the general welcome and helping people get to the worship service comfortably, the door stewards hold individual duties: one is the fire officer who stays in the foyer throughout the service, one does the Bible reading and the offering, the other also helps with the offering.

Full copies of the door steward duties are available by email. If you think this is something which you might be interested to get involved with, please speak to Fiona Somerville (rota.auc@gmail.com)

Funeral Notice

Bridget Ackerley, a classics teacher and member of AUC, has passed away. Bridget had been in St Raphael's nursing home for over a decade unable to communicate.

Her funeral will be on **Monday 5th March** at **1.30pm in Mortonhall Crematorium** with no flowers but a collection for Christian Aid.

We will celebrate her life more fully in the next edition of Seeds.

How is the Spirit calling us to develop our ministry and mission?

These are fruit-filled times in the life of AUC. We have many gifts, much passion and much care for each other. We are welcoming new people. We have a gospel vision to grow in our inclusion, in our participation, in our relationships and in our ministry & mission.

Over the past couple of years we have been exploring how God is calling us to move forward. Through much discussion at the Away Day, in Church Meetings and Church Council meetings, we have concluded that we are being called to:

- **raise our profile** in the city, standing as a prominent beacon of inclusive, progressive and questioning Christianity
- **strengthen our community** by establishing relationships which make us all feel connected and give us a feeling of collective ownership as well as ensuring we all have a strong sense of what AUC does and how to become involved

Three Key Priorities

With this clear sense of direction in mind, and facing our current context, at our November 2017 Church Meeting we identified three key priorities:

- **1:** to enable **better communication and participation** within AUC internally and externally
- **2:** to enable our membership to collectively address **financial self-sufficiency**
- **3:** to identify patterns of deployed Ministers of Word & Sacrament and **potential partners**

We will be returning to priorities two and three in a future newsletter, but here are some structural changes you will see at AUC to help us realise priority one.

Church Life Ministry Teams

AUC is shaped by the work of our Church Life Ministry Teams who take responsibility for different areas of church life. Our current structure of ministry teams (Worship & Education; Justice & Peace; Children & Youth; Membership; Our Tribe; Pastoral; Centre, Property & Finance) needs adjusted to focus our energies on the following key areas:

- **Communications**
- **Building Community/Pastoral Care**
- **Centre, Property & Finance**
- **Worship & Education**
- **Justice & Peace**
- **Children & Youth**
- **Heritage & Visitors**
- **Our Tribe**

The members of the former Membership group will be redistributed between two new teams. **Communications** will seek to improve our ability to communicate within and outwith the congregation, and be responsible for developing and managing AUC's website, our Seeds newsletter, our social media, marketing materials and regular congregational communications.

The **Building Community/Pastoral Care** team will focus on building and strengthening relationships throughout the AUC community and on encouraging and enabling more participation. Its role as an umbrella for a number of task teams would continue, but all the groups would meet twice a year in a larger Pastoral Team Meeting.

Likewise, the **Children & Youth, Education** and **Justice** teams would hold an annual Discipleship Forum, encouraging connection and cross fertilisation in their planning and activities.

In addition, in order to develop and utilise our Heritage project, and to engage with our numerous tourists and visitors, we will be establishing a **Heritage & Visitors Ministry Team**. An application to Vision 2020 has been successful in securing three years of funding to develop this specific ministry.

We will be returning to the subject of funding in a future newsletter and considering its implications on our longer-term vision and collaborations, but for now we invite you to have a think about how you might chose to engage in our reorganised Dandelion, as we seek to strengthen our community and raise our profile across the city. Which seeds could you help to spread?

What might God empower **you** to do and sow?

Rev Fiona Bennett

Pastoral Care

“...bearing with one another in love...”

(Ephesians 4:2)

At AUC, we aim to provide a web of care which promotes growth in relationships and good spiritual/mental health, through both informal and formal contacts.

If you are looking for individual support please contact a minister: **Rev Fiona Bennett** (minister.auc@gmail.com) or **Rev Maxwell Reay** (revmaxwell.auc@gmail.com).

As well as offering 1:1 support in the setting which is most appropriate for you, they can link you with the pastoral visiting team which offers regular support to the housebound.

Prayer requests are welcomed. They can be shared with the ministers either directly or via Nicola in the Church Office.

If you would like support due to a mental health issue, you would be welcome at the Mental Health Drop-in, held weekly on Tuesdays 10.30am-12pm in the Sanctuary (followed by a Time for Reflection). This is hosted by AUC and run by the NHS Lothian Spiritual Care team. Further details are available on the 'Tenants and Room Users' noticeboard, or speak to Maxwell.

Full contact details for Fiona/Maxwell and the office are on the cover of Seeds.



Environmental Survey



Thank you to everyone who took part in the recent survey. I received 22 responses (representing about 30 families and church attendees) from the 47 forms given out.

The responses were very encouraging, showing that people are really thinking about what they might be able to do to live a more sustainable lifestyle. All respondents seem to be doing their best to be environmentally friendly: most trying not to buy too much food or throw away excess; using the Council's recycling services; or using charities to recycle clothes, books and other goods; considering how best to travel locally and when going on trips; attempting not to use too much power for heating; and thinking about conserving water. A lot of folk are willing to sign petitions on environmental concerns or belong to campaigning organisations.

No-one can ever be perfect, and compromises always need to be made, often due to time or financial constraints. Additionally, quicker/easier transportation of groups, which include children or less able people, means that cars are used more frequently than they might otherwise be.

However, it is very good to know that such a number within the congregation are trying to play their part in caring for God's creation – a great response.

Environmental/Eco-Congregation Church Meeting

We also had an interesting February Church Meeting considering what we have done in AUC to be more environmentally friendly over the years, what we are doing now, and what might be possible in the future.

We discovered that, over nine years, despite a huge increase in room hire (up about 33%) electricity consumption has increased by only about 3%. This comparative large reduction in energy consumption is probably due to use of blinds in the sanctuary windows, great care by staff in selecting suitable size rooms for hire groups, better tariffs/heating timings and much better insulation in the new roof.

Church folk brought ideas about their own lifestyles. One such idea concerned the use of thin plastic coverings and bags. Could we dispense with single use plastic bags in supermarkets? Could those not already vegetarian or vegan go without meat or fish one day per week?

We gathered suggestions which might improve our AUC lifestyle, and encourage more of our hirers too. Before we complete the application forms for an Eco-Congregation Award, we will review some parts of the contract that our Administrator and Treasurer make with room hirers, in order to see if we can make the wording a little clearer about what an Eco-Congregation actually is and what using fairly traded food means; we thought we should also be more assertive in asking hirers to co-operate with our ethos. We specifically wish to ask that they try, whenever possible, to use fairly traded coffee or tea; to use the dishwasher and our crockery & cutlery, rather than disposables; to dispose of litter in the appropriate rubbish bins; to switch off room lights when finished.

As always, please talk to me or others in the Justice & Peace CLMT if you have any suggestions.

Thanks, **Kathleen Ziffo**



Special Focus: Food



When we look at our environmental impact on the planet one of the things that is changing most rapidly is our desire to have food all year around.

If you are looking for asparagus in January or apples in April they will not be from the UK or even Europe. Our want for cheaper and all year round food is changing our planet and is coming at a human cost too. Cheap food will not be paying farmers a living wage no matter where you are in the world, but buying locally and in season will give you the best price for great taste.

You will find that the hardest month will be in March but with the ever changing weather it is always best to speak to the amazing farmers at any of our Edinburgh markets. They will be the ones who can tell you what has been growing and when to expect new and exciting ingredients. April to early June will be when our spring food will start to appear again so this is when we can truly start to embrace eating local.

Here's some food for thought to get you started:

Kale – you will find Italian Black Kale the first to show up on the farm stalls, it is softer than most kales but best eaten earlier in the season. Soon to follow is ones we best know, the Scottish and Russian kale, this you will find most of the year, destalk and chop then sauté with garlic to bring out its best.

Broccoli – this vegetable is becoming more over looked and you will find prices falling to around 50p a head in most supermarkets. At it's best steamed, you can use the thick stalk to add to soups and even oven roast the florets to add a nutty flavour.

Cabbages – why not try pyramid or pointed cabbage hugging some good Scottish butter or slow cook a red one with some seasonal apples? Winter cabbage is made for a Sunday roast, soaking up some gravy to bring back memories of family dinners. This vegetable is happy cooked or raw and is around most of the year apart from April.

Winter Squash – these come into season

between October and March, you will get a lot of vegetable for your money but do not confuse them with the varieties grown for Halloween, these types will be watery and have little flavour.

Smaller seasonal varieties of winter squashes can be easily roasted and work well stuffed for a vegan winter hearty meal. Thai flavours work well with these squashes. Any leftovers can be blended to make a flavoursome soup.

Potatoes – this is one of the vegetables we do best here in Scotland. You will find varieties all year round, but again talk to the producers to make sure its local. One of the most shocking things I discovered a few years ago was that in Egypt water was being diverted from local communities to feed the growing demand for cheap potatoes. If you do one thing then please buy locally grown potatoes, the sheer weight alone of transporting them will reduce your carbon footprint! Buying 'dirty' potatoes will help them last longer.

Beetroot – probably Scotland's most neglected and versatile vegetable with varieties available almost all year. Make the most of new season baby ones by using the tops in a salad or cook quickly in a wok with some garlic and ginger and some toasted sesame oil. If you think Beets taste too earthy then try the golden varieties. You can eat this vegetable raw, boiled, baked in foil, roasted, souped, juiced, pickled, made into chutney and even in chocolate cakes.

Roasting Vegetables – when it comes to our winter vegetables cooking them in the oven makes every one of the sing to its own tune. We should call them wonderful roots, as they are our true hidden bounty. Parsnips, celeriac and even swede all roast well. Add a little maple or local honey to enhance the natural sweetness. Like potatoes they should be bought dirty where possible.



Jayson Mannings

Whole Roasted Cauliflower

Ingredients

4 cloves of garlic
 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
 ½ a bunch of fresh thyme (15g)
 olive oil
 1 lemon
 1 large cauliflower, with outer leaves (1kg)
 4 tablespoons apple juice
 1x400g tin of quality plum tomatoes
 40g flaked almonds
 ½ a bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley (15g)
 extra virgin olive oil

Thanks Jayson for this wonderful sounding recipe. I know I'm looking forward to giving it a bash. I'll make a wee prize available for the first person to send me a picture of their attempt! ~Ed.

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4.
2. Peel the garlic, then add to a pestle and mortar with the paprika and half the thyme leaves. Bash well to a rough paste, then add in 2 tablespoons of olive oil and season.
3. Zest the lemon into a separate bowl and set aside.
4. Trim the outer cauliflower leaves. Trim away and discard the stalk so the cauliflower can sit flat, then cut a cross into the base.
5. Rub the paprika paste all over the cauliflower and place in a medium casserole pan. Drizzle over the apple juice and squeeze the lemon juice on top.
6. Cover and pop in the hot oven for around 1 hour 20 minutes, or until tender, removing the lid for the final 20 minutes.
7. Remove the pan from the oven and pour in the tomatoes, tearing or slicing them up into chunks. Sprinkle over the lemon zest and pick over the remaining thyme leaves.
8. Return the pan to the oven for a further 10 minutes or until the cauliflower is golden.
9. Meanwhile, toast the almonds in a dry frying pan over a medium-low heat until golden, then leave to cool.
10. Once ready, take the pan out of the oven. Scrunch over the toasted almonds, then pick, roughly chop and scatter the parsley leaves on top.
11. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil, then carve up and serve with rice and steamed greens, or as part of a bigger spread.



Helplines:

Trauma Counselling Line Scotland: 08088 02 04 06 (M-W 5-8pm; Th-F 9am-2pm; 24/7 answerphone; www.survivorscotland.org.uk)

LGBT Support: 0300 123 2523

Samaritans: 116 123

Childline: 0800 1111

Silver Line: 0800 4 70 80 90

Rape Crisis: 8088 010 302

Breathing Space: 0800 838587

Edinburgh Crisis Centre: 0808 8010414

Annual Theme: "Beginning and Belonging – Stories of Faith and Life".

Module for March: "Teachings of Jesus"

In March we will:

- Have a Godly Play story and a shared feast on the topic of The Parable of the Sower
- Have a Godly Play story and a shared feast on the topic The Parable of the Great Pearl
- Celebrate All Age Worship on Palm Sunday



Images from – www.godlyplayfoundation.org

I WONDER

From the Wall of the Junior Church Room



Junior Church welcomes families in all their wonderful diversity. We do our best to offer a safe and nurturing space for families and their friends. We have varied activities each week, from storytelling, to crafts, games and video making. We have a crèche for little ones and baby changing facilities are available. We use materials to appeal to children's different learning styles using the PowerXpress curriculum, and also use Godly Play (www.godlyplay.org.uk).

Children at Augustine are welcome to receive communion and to fully participate in the life of the church. Children regularly help during services, and sometimes serve communion to the wider church community.

Please feel free to contact us using the details on p.2 of Seeds if you have any questions.

Calendar

AUC Worship Services at 11am on Sundays at AUC, George IV Bridge. (All events at AUC, unless otherwise stated. Later updates on website/notice sheet)

March		Season of Lent
Friday 2 nd	2pm	World Day of Prayer Service at Salvation Army, East Adam St
Saturday 3 rd	2pm	Ordination and Induction of David Scott to Saughtonhall & Duke Street URCs at Murrayfield Parish Church
	2-4pm	Augustine Assignments (Youth Service)
Sunday 4 th	10am	Gift Day (see p.3)
	11am	Morning Worship with Communion
Monday 5 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – live music
Wednesday 7 th	7pm	Manna & Mercy TLC Lent Study
Friday 9 th	10am	Walk & Talk
Saturday 10 th	10.30am – 12.30pm	The Big Brew for Fairtrade Fortnight (see p.2)
	2.30pm – 4.30pm	The Big Brew for Fairtrade Fortnight (see p.2)
Sunday 11 th	11am	Morning Worship for Mothering Sunday and Fairtrade Sunday, with Rev John Miller
	12.45pm	Church Business Meeting
Monday 12 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – Heather McHaffie (Edinburgh Eco-Congregation Network)
Tuesday 13 th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study
Wednesday 14 th	7pm	Manna & Mercy TLC Lent Study
Friday 16 th to Sunday 18 th		URC Synod of Scotland Annual Meeting at Tulliallan
Saturday 17 th	2-4pm	Augustine Assignments (Youth Service)
Sunday 18 th	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, with Laurence Wareing
Monday 19 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – Botanics
Tuesday 20 th	7.30pm	Spirituality Book Group – Being Christians and Inclusive Today
Wednesday 21 st	7pm	Manna & Mercy TLC Lent Study
Holy Week		
Palm Sunday	11am	All Age Morning Worship for Palm Sunday
	12.45pm	Church Lunch
Monday 26 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – AGM
Tuesday 27 th	7.30-9pm	Coffee, Cake & Conversation
Maundy Thursday	1.30-3pm	Coffee, Cake & Conversation
	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday at Greyfriars Kirk
Good Friday	12-3pm	Three Hours by the Cross at St Columba's by the Castle
	9pm	Tennebrae at Greyfriars Kirk
Saturday 31 st	2-4pm	Augustine Assignments (Youth Service)
Easter Sunday	10am	Egg Roll Breakfast
	11am	Easter Family Worship with Communion



You have be warned! The clocks 'spring forward' on Sunday 25th March.

Please note the deadline for material for the April issue is Sunday 25th March.

DISCLAIMER: Although we check all information, as ever we can give no warranties as to accuracy or relevance and encourage active checking. The views expressed in our newsletter are those of the individual contributor, they are not necessarily those of AUC or the editor.